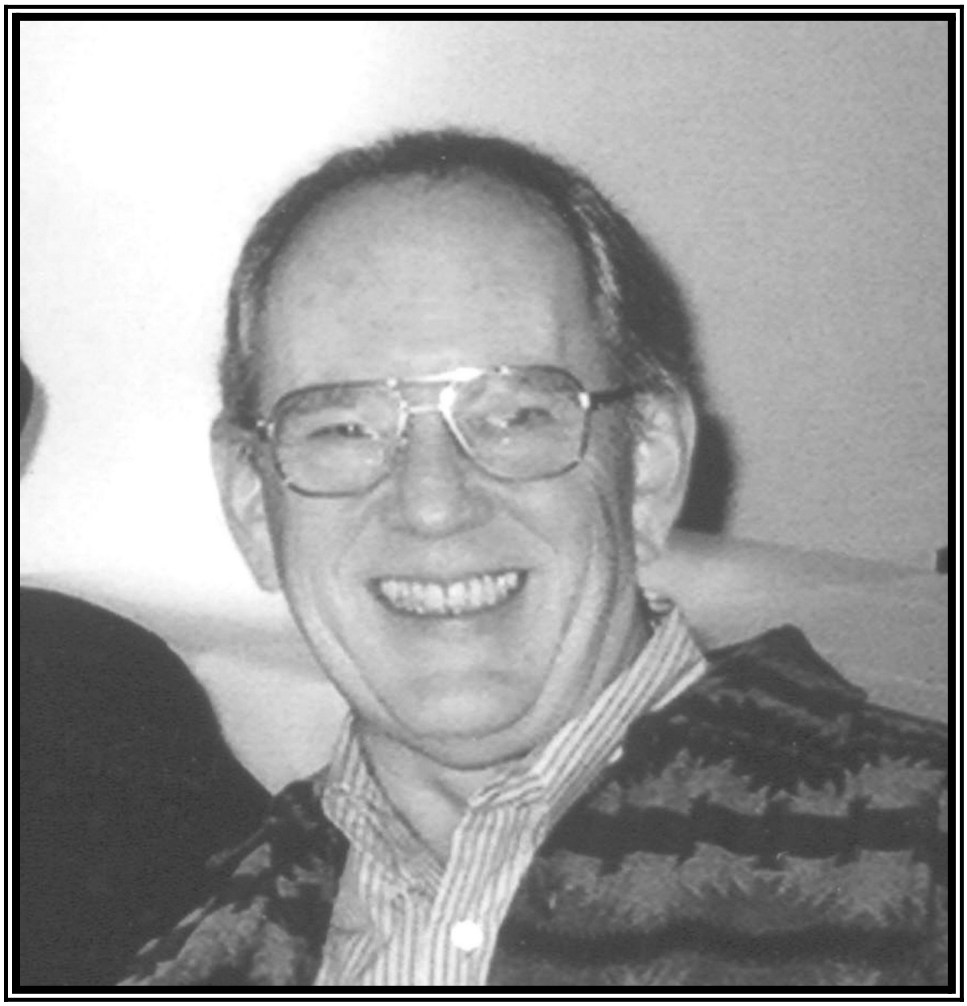
Volume 8, Edition 5 1/2

Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club WIRELESS

June 2004



IN REMEMBERANCE OF STEVE TODD, K2IYQ

THE JUNE VOMARC MEETING WILL BE AT MCDOUGAL HALL, SDC
THIS WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, AT 7:30 P.M.

FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL

Our biggest news was the passing of Steve, K2IYQ. He will be certainly be missed by all of us.

Make sure you attend the next meeting at McDougal hall. The main topic will be Field Day organization. There are plenty of loose ends to tie together, so hope to see you all there.

The sun spot cycle is taking its toll on the HF bands. Ten meters is non-existent and fifteen meters is rare. Twenty is the only band with any chance of working DX.

Thanks to all who turned out for the Hit the Road Jack race. According to the Sonoma paper, it was a financial success with local
charities the beneficiaries. A special Thanks to Jan, AE6FQ, for getting the crew organized. Our next event to support is the 4th of July parade. Keep your batteries charged.

It appears that the BPL issue is not going away, so if can spare a few bucks, the ARRL could sure use it for their legal battles against it.

Hope to see you at the next meeting. Remember to get on the air and keep our bands occupied.
73, Jim

STEVE TODD, K2IYQ, Dec. 26, 1940 - June 2, 2004

We were blessed in many ways to have Steve a part of our club and our lives. When he became president, it seems like the club had a new purpose, have fun. He used to say this a lot, "If isn't fun, then
don't do it." With that motto in mind, VOMARC took off.

Steve was generous with his time. Just call with a problem and he would have you over to "Toad Hollow" for assistance. He used to take great pleasure in watching me "screw up." Many times the simple things that I overlooked, he picked up and got the project working.

More importantly was his gift of being the organizer and leader.

Just about every club project, he managed. The two important AMSAT
projects dealing with earth and sun sensors are another example of his willingness to take on a task. He was able to get the people in the group to come together and get the job done. And he did it with a smile or a laugh, never a stick. As they say in show biz, "He is going to be a hard act to follow."

He was also an ACS assistant com leader. Many drills we were put through, were organized by Steve. He was dedicated to emergency services and taught us all a lot about it.

Steve was always willing to learn a new aspect of ham radio, even though his main interest was microwave and the satellites. When APRS came out, he did it. When PSK-31 came out, he did it. His station could transmit on a range from 3.5 Mhz to 10 Ghz. He was working on a 24Ghz rig.
How can we ever forget the smile, the drive, the yen to have fun and the love for his wife and family. If there is a ham station in heaven, Steve is now up-dating it to the 21st century.

Jim, K6UUW

FRANK JONES, W6AJF, SUPERGAINER

A Super-Gainer, a receiver shielding the regenerative detector with a single, usually passive IF can, was popularized by Frank Jones, W6AJF in the 1930s. His last was described 20 years later in CQ for Nov, 1957.

That one had "relatively poor performance on phone," for it's crystal filter but the generalized model of a Super-Gainer became an ex parte to England where it bunked at G3VA's Technical Topics as a generalized simple RX.

That's where George Dobbs, G3RJV, sighted it in 1987.

So did, at least, did Colin Davis, G3VMU, who offered a solid state version called "Nicky's TRF." That one, from Sprat, is also at page 196 of "Low Power Scrapbook." (2001 RSGB), which is in fact a Sprat anthology.

And George Dobbs took another version to Dayton for FDIM in 2000.

These new models have no new-ish crystal filter but sport an infinite impedance detector, of all things. The infinite impedance detector was an Ancient's alternative to the blunt instrument diode, which detunes one's IF. And George's is becoming an IF. It's tunable now, up from 6 mc like a White Rose RX. He fits converters to it.

So the Super-Gainer, once a CW expedient, is now a civilized version of
the regenerative blooper which separates detection and regenerative detection and, sometimes, serves behind converters as a tunable element--a radio for all seasons.

But it's still neither fish nor fowl. A fistful of computer crystals will get you more CW selectivity than you can use these days, and the new "Experimental Methods in RF Design" will show you how to fold one
sideband in and skip the

crystals and the heterodyne. Haywood et al can do a lot now, even without the DSP chapters, but they can't kill the Super-Gainer. It's detector is right there on page 1.11, with an attribute to GI3XZM via George Dobbs. Presumably, even with the accompanying CD, there was not enough space to footnote Super-Gainer-ism back to W6AJF and forward through all it's resting places since.

But why build one?

OK, why drive a sports car? A Super-Gainer is much like a MG with German electronics and a hardened crankshaft: it would be fun to get around with all that versatility and balance and not be relying on various forms of overkill.

And you could listen to BBC, for a little while until they figure out a way to cut it off to us completely.

Michael, MNHopkins@JUNO.com, ab5L, G-QRP #669, (Great Britain QRP Club) Student of Tecraft, ICM and 6 Meter's Golden Age: 1956-58

Qrp-l mailing list

VOMARC FIELD DAY, June 26-27

If you are one of the new members of VOMARC, and have earned your Technician Class license just this year, then you may not have had the pleasure of participating in the annual VOMARC Field Day exercise.

Be warned; it involves a lot of eating and talking. You will notice that I put the emphasis on the eating part.

Field Day is the annual national emergency communications exercise sponsored by the ARRL. Hams all across the country get on the air for 24 hours of operation after setting up temporary antennas, power supplies and radio stations.

Field Day is structured as a contest, with more points awarded for stations operating on emergency power, and bonuses given for solar, CW or low power operation.

The point of the exercise and contest is to give hams nationwide at least once a year practice in operating independent of any permanent infrastructure, as would be required in the event of a natural disaster.

Operation is allowed on all bands and with all modes not specifically prohibited for contesting, such as 12 or 17 meters HF. Many stations will be operating satellite, ATV (amateur television), microwave, phone, data and CW (Morse code), and will operate as individuals or as groups or clubs.

Scoring is divided into categories for each mode of

operation. VOMARC usually operates with two or three stations using emergency power. We would then be competing for points only with other stations in that same category.

Operation and participation is not limited to HF operation, which would require a General Class or higher license. New Technicians, if they want, can operate VHF and UHF, phone, CW or data, as long as they make contacts directly and not through a repeater.

VOMARC Technician Class hams can operate all modes and bands by participating in the club Field Day event. Because VOMARC is operating as a club, using the club call sign W6AJF (Frank Jones' old call), and because the operating stations are under the control of a higher class control operator, all participants can operate over all bands using the appropriate modes. As an example, a Technician Class VOMARC member could operate in the Extra Class segments of the bands as long as an Extra Class operator was acting as control operator, even if he or she might be lounging in a hammock under a tree. In order to operate in the CW portion of the Extra band, the Technician would have to operate CW though.

VOMARC ahs never taken the contest so seriously that it has restricted Field Day to its best contest operators. The club has instead encouraged all the new or low-time members to come out and get on the air to gain experience operating bands and mode they otherwise couldn't as Technicians. VOMARC has always considered Field Day to be an excellent Elmering (mentoring) opportunity instead.

VOMARC will have its Field Day station at Maxwell Park again this year. We will set up in the picnic area near the Boys and Girls Club. The antennas will start going up Saturday morning and operation can start at 11 a.m. local time.

Planning for Field Day will be finalized at the VOMARC meeting this Wednesday at McDougal Hall at the Sonoma Developmental Center, with the meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. Among the details to be finalized are who will bring their radio stations, including power cord, microphone, headsets or speakers, tuner and SWR meters, and any other equipment necessary for operating.

The club has several antennas, and some of the members will go to the operating site before the event to scout out locations for the antenna trailer and beam, and the wire antennas.

We mentioned earlier that this is an operating contest with eating involved. The meals will depend on the cooking facilities available, but VOMARC usually has a barbecue Saturday

evening and a breakfast Sunday morning. One way or another, the meals will be made so the operators, visitors and families will be fed. VOMARC has its priorities, after all.

Finally, it doesn't even need mentioning that there will be almost non-stop talking, both on the air and off. Whether VOMARC members can come out Saturday morning, afternoon or evening, or just sometime Sunday morning, this will be another relaxed time during which all our members can just visit and have a good time.

The other major annual event for VOMARC is the hamfest, and while we have a good time then, it isn't exactly relaxing.

We want to extend a special invitation to all our members who haven't been to a meeting for a while, who haven't operated much, or who have only recently been licensed to come out and get on the air with an experienced VOMARC member by your side to help and support.

See you at the meeting, and see you at Field Day!

SOUNDS LIKE OL' STEVE IS HOLDING HIS MICROPHONE UPSIDE DOWN, AGAIN

Steve had a very nice send-off last Monday. His family told us that his favorite radio and key were put in the coffin with him. Maybe we will hear from him again soon.

THE VOMARC WIRELESS

VOLUME 8 EDITION 5 1/2

A publication of VOMARC, the Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club – W6AJF

Frank C. Jones – W6AJF
Honorary President in Perpetuity

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Jim Hill, K6UUW – President
George Maurer, K6ITE– Vice-Pres
Joan Brady, W6WXU – Secretary
Ken McTaggart, N6KM – Treasurer
Eileen Adams, KG6QNT, Membership Chair
Mike Miller, WB6TMH – Radio Officer
Ken McTaggert, N6KM – ACS
Jan Bush, AE6FQ - Webmeister
Darrel Jones, WD6BOR – Editor

Receipt of the Wireless is one of the most sought after benefits of membership in VOMARC.

CLUB MEETINGS are held on the third Wednesday of each month, alternating between McDougal Hall at the Sonoma Developmental Center, Eldridge, and the Sonoma Fire Station, 630 2nd Street West, Sonoma. Meetings start at 19:30 local (7:30 P.M.).

WEB PAGE:
http://www.vomarc.org/

Nets are held every Wednesday night at 19:30 (7:30 P.M.) local, except meeting nights on the 145.350 repeater, -600 kHz, PL 88.5 Hz.

ACS holds a net each Monday evening at 19:30 local on the 146.205, +600, PL 88.5 Hz repeater.

PACKET STATION INFO: The VOMARC packet station is on 144.910 as "SNV1EC". "SNVGW" can be used as a gateway digipeating on 223.66 MHz. The node name is "SNVND".

CLUB BREAKFASTS are held on the first Saturday of each month at Issa's Restaurant, 18999 Sonoma Highway, Sonoma. The fun starts at 09:30 local.

Comments and submissions of material may be sent to:

WD6BOR@VOM.COM

Valley of the Moon ARC, Inc.

175 First Street West

Sonoma, CA 95476

Valley of the Moon ARC
1496 Nut Tree Lane
Sonoma, CA 95476

NOTICE!!! THE MARCH VOMARC MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, AT 7:30 P.M. AT MCDOUGAL HALL, SDC
CU THERE!

VOMARC MEMBERSHIP
VOMARC 2004 Membership Dues: $10/year individual; $5/year family member.

VOMARC encourages its members to join the ARRL. More information is available at www.arrl.org.
QST is available to blind and physically handicapped individuals on audio cassette from the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Call 1-800-424-8567.

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VOMARC: $_____

Membership Moment, From the Database Queen

Please check the mailing label on this newsletter. It tells you when your VOMARC dues are due. Dues may be mailed to Ken N6KM, or Jim K6UUW, 1496 Nut Tree Lane, Sonoma, CA 95476, or brought to the January meeting. If there is any mistake, please do not shoot the messenger, email Eileen KG6QNT at Eileen@vom.com. Your check should be made payable to: **VOMARC**